



April/May 2004



SCHOOL FINANCE UPDATE

A Monthly Newsletter Published by the School Finance Division

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Phone (406) 444-4401
FAX (406) 444-0509
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us>

Linda McCulloch, State Superintendent

This monthly newsletter is emailed to school districts, county superintendents, county treasurers, and auditors. The newsletter is intended to reach all district staff involved in budgeting, accounting, enrollment, special education funding, and federal programs. Please forward this information to all interested parties. Got suggestions for items to include here? We'd love to hear from you!



Deadline for 2nd Semester Transportation Claims

TR-5 and TR-6 claim forms are due to OPI on May 24, 2004. Timely claims will be paid in mid-June. According to administrative rules, OPI must withhold the 2nd semester payment until September for claims received after May 24.

The policy is necessary to allow enough time for OPI to process the claims and make the mid-June payment on time. With only 2-3 weeks to process approximately 500 claims and payments, including many last minute individual contracts and bus route changes, accurate and timely payments depend on your cooperation.

Please plan ahead to meet the May deadline. Regardless of whether the delay is caused by the district or county, late claims will result in delayed payments.

OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot,
mmougeot@state.mt.us
or (406) 444-3096.



Special Ed Reversion Check-Up Time

April is a great time to ensure your district will spend the required amount for special education to avoid "reversion." Reversion is the act of refunding state special education allowable cost funding to the state if the district failed to spend the state funding plus the required \$1 for \$3 match.

Verify the match for related services block grant was remitted to the cooperative consistent with the requirements of 20-9-321 MCA. If you need additional special education expenditures to avoid reversion, consider sending an additional contribution to the cooperative to support the cooperative's expenses. Payments to a special education cooperative are counted toward the district's "spending to avoid reversion."

More info on special education funding and reversion:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/Reversion.html>

OPI Distributes Indirect Cost Rate Applications for FY05 Grant Projects

Applications for indirect cost rates for FY 2004-05 are now posted on the OPI website at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/acct.html>.

Indirect cost recoveries are OPTIONAL; but you must have a rate approved by OPI if you intend to claim indirect cost recoveries from grants in FY 05. The OPI-approved rate can be used on state and federal grants, including grants administered by OPI or received directly from a federal agency or

another state agency. Application forms are due back to OPI by May 31, 2004. **OPI Contacts: Jim Oberembt, (406) 444-1257 or joberembt@state.mt.us**



School Budgeting and Accounting Workshops

The School Budgeting & Accounting Workshops (aka "Summer Games") have been scheduled:

Wednesday, July 7	Kalispell
Thursday, July 8	Missoula
Friday, July 9	Butte
Tuesday, July 13	Sidney
Wednesday, July 14	Miles City
Thursday, July 15	Billings
Wednesday, July 21	Havre
Thursday, July 22	Great Falls

Register on-line at:
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/sbaw/>

OPI Contact: Nica Carte at (406) 444-4401 or
ncarte@state.mt.us.

It's April – Does OPI Have YOUR Grant Cash Request Forms?

The OPI Program Accountants have discovered that many districts have not yet sent in cash request forms for FY04 grants. Some grants, including ABLE, Carl Perkins, Character Ed, IDEA Part B, IDEA Preschool, Learn and Serve, Reading Excellence, State Improvement (We Teach All), 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Students with Significant Needs, and State Gifted and Talented end on June 30, so it is especially important to request cash soon for those grants. The last date to request funds on those grants ending June 30 is August 10.

- If you have not submitted a cash request for the year, please do so ASAP.



When setting the transportation fund budget for FY 04, it would be wise...

to include bus driver training!

- If you submitted a cash request but have not yet received money, this could indicate a problem - please check with the OPI Program Accountants.

Need a cash request form? Go to:
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/FedPrgms/CashAdvReq.pdf> (Fill-In Form)

OPI Contacts:
Jurenne Fuchs (406) 444-2560
jfuchs@state.mt.us
Pat Dawes (406) 444-3408
pdawes@state.mt.us
Madilon Beatty (406) 444-4403
mbeatty@state.mt.us

Free MAEFAIRS Training

The Division of School Finance will offer MAEFAIRS training on Thursday, July 29, in Helena. This training is designed for school district personnel responsible for completing the TFS/Budget reports. For more information or to register, contact Nica Carte at (406) 444-4401 or email ncarte@state.mt.us.

Budget for Bus Driver Training

As you plan next year's budget, remember to include funding to provide bus drivers the required minimum of 10 hours of annual training in your transportation fund budget.

Opportunities include the Montana Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT) summer conference and regional meetings held by groups of schools throughout the state during the school year.

MAPT Conference: June 23-25, 2004 in Lewistown
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/MAPTCONFERENCE.pdf>

For more information on potential training opportunities, contact Maxine Mougeot at (406) 444-3096 or mmougeot@state.mt.us.



Useful Websites

List of all Official OPI E-Mails:
http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/Official_Mail

Fill-In Forms Provided by MASBO: Several fill-in forms (TR-1, TR-4, and grant cash request forms) are available on the MASBO website at <http://www.masbo.com>. Special thanks to MASBO's Roger Heimbigner, who developed the forms!

OPI's GASB 34 Web Page:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/gasb34.html>.

OPI's "Get Answers" searchable databases:

http://data.opi.state.mt.us/scripts/rightnow.cfg/php.exe/enduser/std_alp.php

Bus Safety and Driver Training Videos:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/TrainingVideos.pdf>

School Finance forms and publications: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/forms.html>

FP-14 Student Attendance Agreement (Fill-In Forms!)

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/FP14.pdf> (Fill-in Form)

Reconciling with the County Treasurer (Excel Spreadsheet):

http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/SchoolFinance/Balance_to_CoTreas_03_04.xls

FP-14A Special Tuition Rates (used with FP-14) <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/FP14AFillin.pdf> (Fill-in Form)

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/Tuition/SpecTuitRates.pdf>

2004 Elections Calendar:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/2004ElectionCal.pdf>. Need more information about elections? Contact Mike Waterman at (406) 444-4524 or mwaterman@state.mt.us.

CFDA Numbers for Federal Grants: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/FederalPrograms/handbook.html> (Appendix F of the OPI State and Federal Grants Handbook)

Budget Amendment Packet: OPI offers a packet of information about the budget amendment process for school districts:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/schoolfinance/forms/2002bapacket.pdf>

Montana Codes Annotated (MCA) Online:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/masterMCASearch.htm>

OPI School Finance Division Staff

Joan Anderson janderson@state.mt.us

Nica Carte ncarte@state.mt.us

Bonnie Maze bmaze@state.mt.us

Jim Oberembt joberembt@state.mt.us

Tal Redpath trredpath@state.mt.us

Nancy Hall nhall@state.mt.us

Denise Ulberg dulberg@state.mt.us

Mike Waterman mwaterman@state.mt.us

Maxine Mougeot mmougeot@state.mt.us